

(1) *Opening of more fish curing yards.* There were only 11 fish curing yards, the average distance between two yards being 18 miles. Only those in the immediate vicinity of these yards were benefited thereby. Fish cured at the yards fetched a higher price than that cured in other places. Apart from the question of price and the benefit to the producers, in the interests of consumers also, it should be made compulsory that fish should be cured only in public yards instead of in the insanitary dwellings of the fisherfolk. This would be possible only if there was a yard at every fishing village.

(2) *Fishery Banks.* The fisherfolk being poor tried to dispose of their goods at the earliest opportunity without waiting till prices went up. The commission agents who sold these goods took advantage of this situation and amassed large profits by buying low and selling high. If banks were opened and money advanced to the fishermen on the security of their goods, they would be able to get better prices and become more prosperous. Cape Comorin, Colachel, Trivandrum, Quilon and Alleppey were the centres badly in need of such banks.

(3) *Appointment of trade agents abroad.* The sale of fish was conducted through commission agents who formed into cliques and offered but very low prices for fish and fish products. It would be advantageous to the exporters if trade agents were appointed by Government at Tinnevely, Colombo and Rangoon with which places, Travancore carried the bulk of the fish trade, in order to furnish timely and correct information about prices and find out better markets and new lines of business.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Netto, you made more or less the same suggestions last year. They will be very carefully considered. I may add that one of the Fishery Inspectors has been trained in Japan. Last year, the Dewan told you that when funds and circumstances permitted Government would think of getting in more experts.

In the last year's Budget, provision was made for opening two new fish curing yards. That had to be dropped for want of funds. The matter will be considered when the next year's Budget is framed. It is chiefly a question of funds.

A scheme for the institution of a Fishery Loan Fund is now engaging attention. When that is passed, the fishermen will have the credit facilities that you talked about.

29. Remedial measures for the present economic depression in the State.

MR. A. MATEVAN PILLAI (*Trivandrum taluk, Group II*) said that a large number of *chitties* were in existence in the State and a large majority of the ryots were subscribers thereto. When the prices of agricultural products were high, these people found it easy to subscribe to the *chitties* regularly. But with the fall in prices and the consequent economic depression, these *chitties* were not properly conducted. Discounts were large and the prize amounts low. The subscribers who had prized the *chitties* defaulted payment. Properties were mortgaged for inconceivably low amounts to

secure future payments. Default in regular payment of instalments necessitated foreclosure of mortgaged properties. The foremen also found it difficult to carry on the *chitties*. The member therefore requested that all *chitties* should be suspended till the economic depression lasted.

Secondly, coercive steps for recovery of tax due for any year should be started only the next year.

Contracts for the repair and maintenance of public roads, canals, etc. and for other public works should be given to the inhabitants of the localities concerned.

The instalments for repayment of agricultural loans should be reduced and the period for repayment increased.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Matevan Pillai, so far as *chitties* are concerned, the question of dealing with them and effectively controlling them is being considered.

As regards contracts for public works they are given to the people of the State whenever possible. Cases may however arise when it is better for the State that such contracts are given to others.

30. Decline in the material welfare of the people and remedies therefor.

MR. N. GOVINDA PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara taluk, Group II*) said that the price of the articles of export such as cocoanut, *copra*, *coir*, pepper, ginger, lemon-grass oil, rubber and fish had gone down considerably while the prices of imported articles did not go down correspondingly. The duty on these articles was also not reduced. The people in consequence were put to much hardship and loss. In order to redress the grievances of the people in this respect, a committee should be appointed to enquire into the causes of trade and economic depression and suggest remedies for their removal. But as the committee would take time to finish its enquiry and submit its report, the following measures should be adopted at once:—

(1) The majority of the people of the State were agriculturists who found it difficult to pay the *kist*. The tax on land should be reduced appreciably as a temporary measure at least. Other countries have adopted this measure on account of economic depression. The member suggested that 50 per cent. of the tax for 1107 be remitted.

(2) The existing tariff rates on cocoanuts, *copra*, *coir* and other articles of export were high when compared to their market value and consequently the export duty on these articles was also high. These rates should therefore be reduced. In cases where such tariff rates have not been fixed, the rates of duty should be appreciably reduced.

(3) The license fee on *catamarans* and for fishing should be reduced from Rs. 15 to Rs. 7½.

(4) All necessary public works such as roads, bridges, culverts and canals in mofussil parts should be taken in hand at once.